

## CHAPTER 7

### 7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

The South African intergovernmental relations system is evolving in an atmosphere characterised by a definitional deficit, in terms of what form of state is South Africa? The anti-colonial wars fought by both the white and black nationalists sought to remove from power, the colonizer and/or oppressor. The concomitant result of the phased anti-colonial victories of 1961 (when South Africa gained political independence from Britain) and 1996 (when the White minority apartheid colonial rule ended) respectively, was a tendency to adopt the intergovernmental relations culture and practices of the preceding regime.

The South African Constitution making process of the 1990's deliberately stood clear of defining or locating South Africa in definite terms on the unitary-federal continuum. The result of this action was the bastardisation of the South African Constitution, whereby it assumed a high degree of fiscal centralisation, underpinned by extreme political decentralisation. The sub-jurisdictional tensions of policy-making autonomy, regional (provincial) self-determination and the geo-demographic features of South Africa were to be reconciled by party-political loyalty and the reconciliation mood that characterised constitution making.

The party political process generated an intellectually bankrupt discourse on what form of state should South Africa be. The associated conceptual naivety often associated with the

perceived federal-unitary divide became lionized in the process, and this resulted in intergovernmental relations enjoying prominence in the Constitution. The resultant obligation for all organs of state and all spheres of government to co-operate, support and consult each other when governing, amplifies the view of being optimal in constitutional reform, as opposed to structure being the optimal focus (a condition where the latter focuses on the effectiveness of structure and the former on the efficiency of government).

The purpose of this study was therefore, to propose an intergovernmental relations reform framework. The study has been able to define intergovernmental relations, co-operative governance, federalism and decentralization that are considered key concepts for intergovernmental relations reform. A literature study on the historical development of intergovernmental relations in South Africa was conducted, thereby capturing through historical demarcations, the reform opportunities presented by the new constitutional dispensation. This was underpinned by a review of intergovernmental relations theoretical issues and an analysis of the intergovernmental relations status quo as at the demarcated period of the study.

This study postulates that the South African intergovernmental reform programme should be based on the country's historical experience, empirical theoretical underpinnings and the already existing (though in muted tones) vibrant provincialism, often mistaken for secessionism or the "demon of regionalism". The philosophical basis and significance of the study is premised on the comprehensive nature of development challenges within multi-sphered jurisdictions. The synergistic and strategic role of a central government agency (with sufficient political power and leverage such as the Presidency) as an intergovernmental relations management and administrative centre, was instructive to the approach and direction of the study.

This chapter highlights the findings of this thesis and their implications on policy. The chapter is structured to include conclusions on a brief synthesis of the chapters. The implications of the study on policy will be discussed and this will follow the direction of highlighting the directly applicable implications as well as broader public policy issues. The chapter will conclude with recommendations for further research.

## 7.2 CONCLUSIONS

The tone of relationships within the concept of intergovernmental relations elevates the activity of intergovernmental co-operation, collaboration and mutual support to a realm often reserved for interpersonal relationships. Intergovernmental relations are defined as the various combinations of interactions, interdependencies, influences and transactions conducted by government officials between and amongst spheres of government (this also includes organs of state). The study therefore concludes that, *intergovernmental relations is a process driven activity that seeks to reconcile sub-national jurisdictional tensions in favour of service delivery and good governance.*

The discussion in Chapter One has shown that intergovernmental relations occurs optimally in dispensations that embrace a government philosophy based on a reciprocal obligation to spheres (levels, tiers) of government to trust, support and assist one another in co-ordinating the delivery of service to the community. The philosophy recognises the predominance of the equal-before-the Constitution principle and constitutionally protected autonomies and sub-national status.

The colonial era realities of South Africa continue to bedevil all facets of the South African governance machinery. The pre-1961 federal experiments of the British colonial

government and the post-1961 Afrikaner minority government's experiments of separate-but-equal federalism have shaped the political demography of South Africa. The power centres that evolved during the said period have also entrenched in sharpened proportions, the geo-demographic differences as manifest in the special arrangements of ethnic, racial, poverty and economic concentrations on the socio-economic landscape of South Africa. These realities dictate the pace at which power will be deconcentrated or decentralised from the centre to sub-national units of government. The degree to which power is decentralised determines the pulse of intergovernmental relations, particularly the relations realm. The study concludes that, *the constitutional history of South Africa remains a determining factor in the reform of the intergovernmental relations system.*

Chapter Two of this study presented the historical development of intergovernmental relations in South Africa. It outlined the development of intergovernmental relations in terms of the 1961, 1983, 1993 and 1996 Constitutions of South Africa. The chapter was mainly historical in perspective, while indicating the environment within which intergovernmental relations developed in South Africa. The author observes that the historical background of intergovernmental relations in South Africa has, as its epicentre, the colonial era federal experiments of the British government particularly, from 1910 to 1961. The British imperial government saw federations as the co-ordinating frontier for its Southern African colonies, as well as an instrument to disarm the Afrikaner challenge to British supremacy, and neutralization of the native African majority threat. This informed the structure of government and therefore, of intergovernmental relations.

The regional socio-economic imperatives as manifest in transport, communication, agriculture, growth of the manufacturing industry, native control as well as land ownership triggered debates around the form and nature of a South African constitutional state in the early 1900s. The constitutionalisation process through the Union of South Africa formation

process put on the governance agenda questions of policy co-ordination, devolution and decentralization. Such an agenda expanded over time to include interactive and transactional relations between and amongst organs of state and spheres of government.

It has been argued that successive South African constitutions have overtly defined the political moods of the times in which they were drafted, and therefore dictated the design, pace and practice of intergovernmental relations. The evolutionary nature of the South African non-racial maturity process and the growth of the South African party political system, has dictated the direction and culture of intergovernmental relations. In other democracies, the tendency to refer to such systems as personality federalism, such as Reagan federalism, also define the political mood and direction of IGR at a particular time

It was concluded that in both historical periods under review, the decisive role of the Governor-General, Prime Minister and later the Executive State President in the management of intergovernmental relations is crucial. The importance of retaining original legislative powers, with repugnancy provisions, was established as a critical ingredient for intergovernmental relations reform. This is however, subject to a scientific application of the subsidiarity and asymmetry provisions that are characteristic of multi-tiered or sphered governments. The intricacies of balancing equity in development as opposed to a separate but equal paradigm liquidated the intergovernmental intent of the erstwhile apartheid-type homeland system. However, the movement towards the use of the economic development rationale as part-determinants for jurisdictional, regional and provincial demarcation redefined the intergovernmental relations intents of sub-national jurisdictions and organs of state. This did not only de-racialise but also began to deal with the disparities of spatial development only negotiable in restitutive settings through intergovernmental relations. The 1993 Constitution became a first in South Africa, in so far

as a regional demarcation criterion was concerned. Whilst this represented an attempt at levelling regional disparity, it left the equalisation process to the evolution of governance. Intergovernmental relations emerged here as a panacea. The study concludes that, *intergovernmental relations have a potential of being a panacea in the negotiations of socio-economic and political disparities in regionalised societies.*

It was further concluded that the 1990-1996 constitutional negotiations process has, through recognizing the centrality of decentralizing government power, redefined the South African intergovernmental relations landscape. This recognition elevates the importance of interdependence, interrelatedness as well as the distinctiveness of sub-national units of government. The resultant benefit of such recognition, argues the author, has been the growth in significance of the need for a central agency to manage and direct intergovernmental relations. The experiences of the 1983 to 1993 low-key reform programme of the then apartheid government continue to instruct the evolution of the South African intergovernmental relations system, particularly as it related to the pivotal role of the then Presidency.

It was concluded that whilst it is difficult to trace in exact terms the origin of intergovernmental relations as a process in government, authoritative literature purports that it originates in multi-sphered democracies from all ends of the federal-unitary continuum. There is a need for the co-ordination of the affairs of the state from their political embryonic state to a public policy implementation state, to be put on the intergovernmental relations agenda of multi-sphered governments. The study concludes in Chapter Three that IGR concerns itself with interactions and transactions between and amongst executives-in-government. However, the author has argued that such interactions do not restrict themselves to government entities, but go through to personal

interrelationships of officials. The fact that IGR transcends the legalistic focus of government in favour of human-centred governance, supports the notion that IGR is a human activity, hence the conclusion that, *intergovernmental relations is a traditional practice in the functionality of government through public officials in a bureaucracy and is therefore, a human activity.*

The study has further argued that the hierarchy debates often associated with the federal-unitary and decentralization discourse is repudiated by the equality of stakeholders on the intergovernmental relations platform. The assumption of superiority and subordinate status of spheres of government only prevails when accountabilities and decision centres per issue have to be clarified, an activity reminiscent of a pecking order that characterises activities involving the humans. It was also argued that IGR brings to the public eye the political and administrative landscape within which service delivery has to occur. The study concludes therefore, that *the study of IGR is not synonymous with that of federalism because IGR is one of the critical platforms upon which multi-sphered political systems along the extreme confederal to extreme unitary continuum, must operate.*

The adage that there are no relations between governments, but relations amongst officials who govern and manage different units, elevates to higher proportions the centrality of personal chemistry and human behaviour in IGR. The design therefore, of any intergovernmental relations system should be based on the assumption that the beneficiary society is built on sound interpersonal relations. The geo-ethnic, racial and geographic domestic products concentrations of South Africa accompanied by the spatial development challenges present chronic regional complexities reconcilable through sound intergovernmental relations. The natural choice of intergovernmental relations as a development equalisation mechanism places these regional complexities in remote

locations as currencies for overt conflicts similar to those in the Great Lakes region of equatorial Africa and Central Europe. The study concludes therefore that, *the ability of the relational element within intergovernmental relations to soften the precincts and limits imposed by constitutions, amplifies the profoundly facilitative and enabling strategic governance nature of IGR.*

The employment of authority models by this study to explain the various intergovernmental relations permutations reconfirmed the ideological neutrality of intergovernmental relations. The study concludes that the reliance of intergovernmental relations on the exchange of information and therefore knowledge management, removes IGR from the hegemonic contestation domain through to a win-win facilitation realm, which is inherent in relational environments. The practice of government within the co-ordinate authority model results in approaches that limit development and that are unfriendly to decentralization as a tested development-facilitating paradigm of governance. The growing demand by sub-national jurisdictions (even in unitary states) in modern democratic states for restraint in the exercise of national power, dictates an obsolescence of the power expanding (co-ordinate) authority model. The author however, concludes that the desirability of applying the co-ordinate model should be dependent on the socio-political exigencies regulated by an independent judiciary.

The study further argues that the ability of the inclusive authority model to expand and contract has the advantage of facilitating the development challenges of restitution, economic redress and affirmative action. The development responsibility bestowed on sub-national units of government can only be checked, in terms of its equalisation impact, through the spasmodic employment of the inclusive authority model. The chapter demonstrated how the employment of this model has shaped for the better or worse, the South African intergovernmental relations landscape. The author further stresses the



federal-unitary continuum upon which the various models can be plotted repetitively and in line with the historical development exigencies. The bargaining model (with its limited and dispersed power, modest and uncertain areas of autonomy; profoundly high degree of potential and/or actual interdependence as well as a win-win relationship paradigm) becomes therefore, a logical intergovernmental relations model. The erratic movement from one model to another and backwards, that characterised the South African intergovernmental relations evolutionary process, lionises the centrality of bargaining exchange relationships and simultaneous co-opetition in the design of any intergovernmental relations framework. The study concludes therefore that, *intergovernmental relations should be designed as an ideologically neutral process that can adapt to any authority-defining model.*

The Chapter argues that the human nature of intergovernmental relations activities, makes IGR subject to endogenous and exogenous societal influences. The endogenous realm focused on the normative framework that instructs the practice of public administration and management. The author explained the impact of supreme political authority, particularly as it manifests itself as constitutional and/or parliamentary supremacy. The impact of IGR's informality on public accountability, efficiency, legal probity and adherence to societal values, were described. The author also observed that, at an endogenous level the influence of the South African Constitution's recognition of the diverse oneness of the South African society as well as the eclectic nature of public policy, provide a sound normative platform for intergovernmental relations reform and design. The author further argued that interactions between spheres of government should be underpinned by a normatively coherent atmosphere of co-operation. The exogenous realm noted the constitutional jurisdiction, form and character of the National Council of Provinces, the party political system, the judicial system, the financial position of each sphere, human

behaviour, and historical and demographic factors, as prime influences. Given the above the study concludes therefore, that *the endogenous and exogenous normative factors influencing the practice of public administration and management have an impact on intergovernmental relations.*

The political heartbeat of intergovernmental relations has the party political system as its supporting veins and arteries. The author argued that the behaviour of elected and appointed officials serves here as ventricles that control the intergovernmental relations flow, the power to regulate the heartbeat lies, unfortunately, with the officials. The South African party political system, despite its hybridised liberation movement to political party challenges, presents a classic example of how the structure of the party influences intergovernmental relations. The professed democratic centralism governance approach of the ruling party (the ANC) compromises the requisite of provincialism of the present sub-national jurisdictions. The reference to the (often real) geo-demographic features of South Africa as “demons” by senior ANC members reduces the velocity of asymmetry in government’s service delivery approaches. The issues of administrative law and jurisdictional contestations are often interpreted in party political terms as opposed to sheer intergovernmental management and logic. The author argues, therefore, that intergovernmental relations have the effect of transcending such dysfunctionalities. Adherence to party political discipline by a bureaucracy removes the citizen as the centre of government activity and puts the party at the centre. It is the conclusion of this study that, *the structure, form and history of the party political system instruct the nature of intergovernmental relations.*

The study examines, in Chapter Four, the contextual terminological nature of intergovernmental relations with a specific focus on the present IGR structures. The

structures were reviewed within an analysis framework that begins to forge a synergistic and coordinative reform paradigm. To this end the author presented questions that are informed by the prevalent factual co-ordinates around the South African IGR system at the national and provincial spheres. The questions range from how to integrate IGR structures to provide a decision flow driven intergovernmental relations system; what are the executive challenges facing national and provincial IGR, through to what should be the key functions of the currently operational national IGR structures.

The study notes that the 1994 democratic breakthrough in South Africa established new IGR structures and restructured old ones. The executive intergovernmental relations focus of the study could not ignore the centrality of the NCOP, particularly given its provincial representative nature. The structures that were subjected to this analysis were the Intergovernmental Forum, the President's Co-ordinating Council, the Committees of Ministers and members of Provincial Councils (MINMECS), the Forum for South African Directors General and the Cabinet Cluster System in the Presidency.

The study observes that co-operation on mutual matters by all spheres of government was the chief rationale for the establishment of the Intergovernmental Forum (IGF). The IGF represented a groundbreaking attempt to create a government-wide inclusive forum that considered line function and strategic matters of governance. The IGF's failure as a multi-lateral, intergovernmental and policy planning body upon which government could rely for support, advice and implementation did however, present opportunities for growth, in so far as inclusive government-wide planning was concerned. The decision making character of the IGF presented a number of operational dysfunctions that were, in the main, managerial and co-coordinative in nature. The growing importance and stature of Provincial Premiers as a result of the provincialism embedded in the South African

constitutional culture brought the role of Premiers to the foreground of IGR. The executive character of the office of the Premier led to the establishment of the Premiers Forum as an IGR support structure, save to mention it's dormancy until it was resuscitated by President Thabo Mbeki.

It was also established that the MINMECS were established to provide a forum to interact for political executives from the national and provincial spheres. The study raises questions about the reliability of the feedback mechanism governing MINMECS, the time-lapse allowable between the consultation and consensus seeking nature of the MINMEC process, the scope and nature of agenda setting or determination as well as the binding force of MINMEC decisions given the non-statutory nature of most MINMECS. The unquestionable position of Directors-General in the South African intergovernmental relations arena as well as their strategic functionary character was also described in this chapter. The assumed intellectual prowess of Directors-General as capacity required in providing a policy review service on the strategic directions of intra-governmental, intersectoral and cross cutting issues, as well as the monitoring of policy alignment was emphasised. Further, it was found that the absence of a centralised intergovernmental relations co-ordination mechanism breeds structural duplication that drains the available capacity, particularly since intergovernmental relations management is a meeting, communication and time intensive exercise. The study concludes therefore, *that intergovernmental relations structures are established to facilitate interactions, co-operation and transactions on mutual matters by all involved (spheres of government and organs of state).*

In Chapter Five the study evaluates the status quo with the intention to explore and provide alternative approaches towards an understanding of the South African IGR

System. The arguments in this chapter indicated that the core questions in the reconstruction and reform of the South African IGR System range from how effectual should such a system be, to how the process of implementing policies should be coordinated in order to achieve the historic development challenges facing the country. The author argued that the attainment of societal development priorities is a collective responsibility of all spheres and organs of state, and therefore relies on the operation of an effective intergovernmental relations system. The intent of the study, which is to investigate the extent to which a central agency such as the Presidency can be involved in the administration and management of intergovernmental relations, instructed the approach of this study.

In the construction of the character of the South African IGR system it was argued that the current IGR structures consist of policy implementation gaps, that can be reconciled through an acceptance that governmental relationships are not random phenomena but require planning. The critical drivers of the South African intergovernmental relations system, according to the study, have been the need to determine a strategic and focused agenda; the accountability of participants in the IGR structure; the status of executive intergovernmental decision centres; and the desirability of legislating for intergovernmental relations. The agenda should provide for mechanisms of accountability both in terms of political representation, stakeholder participation, and generic inclusivity as well as in creating a high level planning focus as opposed to the traditional functional focus.

In an attempt to provide alternatives, the study establishes that the fragmentation that defines the interconnectivity of intergovernmental relations structures, has a dampening effect on the volume and velocity of multi-jurisdictional and multi-sectoral service delivery. The review of what form of state South Africa is, and the political relevance of the

Constitutional detail, has demonstrated a potential to limit a focus on national emergencies, such as restitution and the HIV pandemic, over its short history. The author argued for the resuscitation of the Intergovernmental Forum with a planning focus to include government, business and civil society. The centrality of the Presidency at the apex of initiating policy debates and direction is provided as the strategic aspect of the Forum. The repeat of the national IGF process in sub-national government-wide inclusive planning was also muted.

The study further proposes terms of reference for MINMECS. The author argues against outright legislation of the MINMEC process and proposes that the public sector market forces should determine areas that require a legislated regulatory framework in an evolutionary manner. The executive significance of Premiers through the President's Coordinating Committee is further identified as a fundamental feature for South African intergovernmental relations reform. The study proposes a revisitation of the Presidency to make provision for an intergovernmental ministerial focus therein. The functional responsibilities of the President's Coordinating Council were also proposed as well as how they interconnect with other intergovernmental relations structures.

Chapter Five also reconfigures the Cabinet Cluster system where the position of the National Director-General is proposed with a Director-General responsible for policy coordination being given an intergovernmental relations focus. The Forum of South African Directors-General, as an operating platform of the South African intergovernmental integration process, is also outlined in this chapter. The fact that Directors-General, in the main, manages various IGR structures makes them user-friendly fast-find icons in the operation of intergovernmental relations software. The technical competence of the institution of the Director-General is further emphasised as a requirement for the

intergovernmental relations package proposed in Figure 7 of this study. In relation to the NCOP, an administrative state view is proposed whereby a chief executive for the NCOP, who will also be a member of FOSAD, is proposed. The study argues for an NCOP bureaucracy that is supported by a proper politically constituted NCOP, where the philosophy of provincial identity instructs the modus operandi. The study concludes therefore that, *the present intergovernmental relations structures in South Africa should be redesigned to eliminate policy implementation spasms, thereby accelerating the speed and pace of multi-jurisdictional and multi-sectoral service delivery.*

### **7.3 POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The coherent nationalist positions of the African National Congress and the National party during the CODESA constitutional negotiations process amplified the importance of history in South Africa. The coincidence of a one-year difference in the founding of these political players further signifies how important historical destiny is, in the design of constitutions. The South African Constitution of 1996 is not a non-fiction work that does not have a history. The Constitution was designed from a rich history that has fraction points denoting a migration along the unitary-federal continuum. The design of the legislation envisaged in Section 41 of the 1996 Constitution Act should therefore, be based on the historical realities of South Africa. The history of South Africa has, over time, entrenched a geo-demographic reality that has shaped provincial and local government.

The intergovernmental relations system should also accept the historical truth that decades of British colonial and apartheid predominance in shaping the South African State has created an intergovernmental relations culture. This culture has national centralised decision-making, sub-national indecision, buck passing, disregard for consultation and a

planning framework with a minority bias. This culture still predominates the present public service delivery paradigm.

It is therefore the submission of this study that the reversal of this culture will require an antithetical tradition informed by past experience and the need to introduce new intergovernmental paradigms. The cultural fracture requisite for the way forward should rely on established systems to sustain the capacity of the state to meet its obligations. The study recommends therefore, that *the design of an (South African) intergovernmental relations system should be cognisant of the historical realities of the society it is designed for.*

A reconstructed and designed intergovernmental relations system must recognise that at the time of drafting the 1996 Constitution, the political environment was characterised by issues such as fear of black majority domination, the protection of ethnic hegemony, centralized and commandist dogmas, a resolve to keep the South African state in tact as well as the predominance of global funding institutions on sovereign public policies. These trends informed the outcome of the constitutional negotiations. The reality is that, a trust relationship has grown over the new Constitution experimentation period, and should therefore; start to permeate into issues such as the allocation of powers and the redefinition of authority relationships between spheres. The political coalitions that have emerged since 1999 between the ANC and IFP (Kwa-Zulu Natal and National), the Democratic Party and the National Party (Western Cape), the Minority Party and the ANC (in Durban) are indicative of the cooling down of political tensions since the 1996 Constitution making process. The latest cooperation between the ANC and the New National Party in the Western Cape as well as the emerging neo-liberal economic policies of the ANC signify a quantum leap in terms of governance environments.



It is the submission of this study that the political atmosphere that made it difficult for South Africa to consider a federal option is in a state of decimation. There is therefore, a compelling need for the policy-making community to consider multi-jurisdictional governance mechanisms such as the asymmetrical allocation of powers. Politically determined jurisdictions such as Provincial and Metropolitan Governments should be given sufficient autonomy in areas where they display marked competency. This will release energies for deployment in areas categorized by this study as development exigencies. The study recommends that *an (South African) intergovernmental relations system must be capable of reconciling the historical societal tensions as manifest in ethnic, racial, and political identity*

The present party political management paradigm is antithetical to the integration of intergovernmental relations management principles into the generic political management of the South African state. The jurisdictionally imposed conditionalities of public service delivery are often subject to the imperatives of party political loyalty. The “deployment” of the bureaucracy along party lines as a political function is sometimes detrimental to independent managerial judgement on issues of an intergovernmental nature. The conclusion that is drawn here is that the structure of government seems to be in conflict with the party political system. It is the submission of this study therefore, that sufficient in-political party autonomy should be given to sub-national jurisdictions. The monolithic approach to governance and government is a form of dictatorship. It is mind boggling for a country with the geo-demography of South Africa not to have constitutional court battles between members of the same party. This can only be possible if the citizen is at the centre first in party terms and then in country terms. The study recommends therefore, that

*political parties (ruling) must be structured to accommodate IGR paradigms entrenched in constitutions. In the case of South Africa, the paradigm is quasi-federal.*

*The co-ordination of government-wide planning and consultation within an IGR paradigm must be underpinned by a conscious resolve to involve at highest levels the leadership in a country. The compositional position of the IGF as an IGR platform dictates a need to reconfigure the IGF to include a much broader mandate. The mandate should inform electoral contestations without vitiating the essence of managing the National development agenda. The proper functioning of the new IGF will be predicated on the issues listed below.*

- Intergovernmental co-ordination and/or the co-operative governance agenda should be based on the attainment of defined outcomes
- Sufficient executive authority should underpin the operation of such structures, thereby eliminating the immunity of the “talk shop” syndrome.
- The information and data exchanged at this forum should add sufficient value to a common understanding of what government is doing and what it is about.
- The forum should provide a mechanism that guarantees political equity thereby, limiting the intimidation of “junior” political office bearers and sub-national representatives.
- The agenda should provide for a futuristic and strategic approach to policy making and development. Issues related to current policy should by design be relegated to reporting and evaluating for improvement.

- The forum should, by design, provide for an effectual communication mechanism that ensures that all spheres of government participate from a sufficiently informed position.
- The forum should provide a cyclical opportunity for intergovernmental structures and institutions to interface in programme and policy development, This could be started by ensuring that intergovernmental decisions of other forums receive a larger stake at IGF meetings.
- The management and administration of the forum should be assigned to a politically higher office whereat policy co-ordination and integration will be enforced through the Presidency. This will ensure an integration orientation within government, a critical requirement in the design of an intergovernmental relations system.

The design of an intergovernmental relations system should be premised on the finding that IGR transcends the limitations imposed by constitutions and ideology. The comprehensive nature of the intergovernmental relations activity dictates that such a system must have a capability to operate under any conditions. This study submits that even in the most absurd of dictatorships, intergovernmental relations between and amongst centres of political or any other power occurred. A functional IGR system will be dependent on the need by those involved to share information and experiences for the common good of governance. The non-dogmatic nature of IGR makes it the foremost neutral mechanism to facilitate service delivery, irrespective of the form of state a country is. The divisive tendencies as manifest in rural-urban, Black and White, developed and developing are easily liquidated if officials interact and transact at programmatic and implementation level. The intergovernmental relations function is a thread that connects government activity along the unitary-federal continuum. The study recommends therefore

that, *intergovernmental relations should be viewed as a functional rather than as a transcendent matter.*

The authoritative position of The Presidency as well as its symbolic nature makes it a candidate for the co-ordination of the intergovernmental relations function. To this end, The Presidency should be restructured to include the IGR function at Ministerial level. The administrative back up for this function should be through the creation of a Director-General position to manage this function. The position of the present Director-General in the office of the President should be elevated to that of National Director-General. The proposed IGR Director-General in the Presidency should assume the responsibility of managing the entire IGR machinery with the Cabinet Clusters as a top-down epicentre and the proposed IGR framework (see page 189) as the bottom-up epicentre. The Director-General should be viewed as a policy-co-ordinator and not policy maker. This should remain a functional activity of sectoral government agencies/departments. The study recommends therefore that, *the Presidency as the apex of the execution of government activity should take responsibility for the intergovernmental relations function.*

The growth in size of sub-national governments with the advent of globalisation and the 1989 collapse of commandist and central planning regimes, put decentralization politics on the global agenda. The co-ordination of these sub-national units within a nation-state and trans-frontier regional paradigm has put intergovernmental relations on the governance agenda. There is therefore, a need to expand the study of Public Administration to include intergovernmental relations administration. This has curriculum design implications. The study recommends that, *the intergovernmental relations theoretical co-ordinates presented in this study must be developed into a focus area of study and teaching in Public Administration.*

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The conversion of information into consumable commodities through the Internet has not only put a stress on governments to deliver, but also brought with it enhanced governance challenges. The results of these challenges are the homogenisation and diffusion of societal values through various media. The consequence of homogenisation is either an improvement or disappearance of the societal normative pillars. The practice of intergovernmental relations in a tight and process-driven approach must establish a normative regime that is congruent with the prevailing socio-political system. The heterogeneity of the South African society must be seen as being an asset in the establishment of a normatively coherent society.

The volatility of the policy-making process that manifests itself in the form of discontinuity at the implementation level of government, does not only bring uncertainty in government but creates unstable governance paradigms. The recognition therefore, of the African governance value system and how it interfaces with the western model of governance becomes therefore, non-negotiable in the design of an intergovernmental relations system. The African worldview that propagates spiritual collectiveness over individualism, consensus rather than dissention, and, humility and helpfulness, should underpin the coherency of the normative environment. This is notwithstanding the realities of western influence and the need to be functional. The study recommends that, *the practice of intergovernmental relations administration and management should be within a normatively coherent atmosphere that is regulated by sufficient political influence.*

#### **7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES**

The definition of intergovernmental relations stresses the interactive and transacting nature of this function, and this places a number of challenges on the subject. The focus

of this study is on Provincial-National relations, notwithstanding the plethora of sub-national jurisdictions in the Local sphere of Government. The transacting nature of the IGR function does not limit it to intra-state relations but also cross border relations between and amongst sub-national jurisdictions. The study proposes therefore, that in the South African context further studies need to be undertaken on the following issues.

- The challenges of intergovernmental relations to the nation state and its ability to dispense centrally considered policies.
- The restructuring of intergovernmental relations within the local sphere of government with particular reference to fiscal autonomy.
- The management of natural trans-frontier regions as a sub-national intergovernmental competence, the case for Southern African states.
- The impact of geo-ethnicity on intergovernmental relations.
- Constitutional reform in South Africa: the aftermath of 1996 and the challenges of the federal option.

## **7.5 CONCLUSION**

The author further submits that intergovernmental relations are a human activity and no Constitution, law or regulation can dictate the relationship warmth underpinning it. The submission of this study is that the Presidency, as the apex of government, should be the epicentre of any government reform programme. Intergovernmental reform should therefore, be located in the Presidency because the President is the head of government and the Public Service. The executive authority of the Presidency qualifies it as a reform driver. It is the submission of the author that, the intergovernmental relations debate in

South Africa lacks the intellectual depth characteristic of federal democracies. The political growth and the non-racial maturation process of the South African society clearly discount pre-1996 Constitution anti-federal nuances. There is therefore, a need for South Africans to face-up to the reality that, South Africa is a federal state and should therefore, manage the intergovernmental relations system as such. The exact position of the South African type of federalism on the unitary-federal continuum remains as issue for further research and investigation.

The greatest intergovernmental relations challenge though, is the degree to which the South African political resolve is prepared to disengage with a unitarist paradigm of intergovernmental relations. This perspective places a premium on the internal dynamics of the South African public administration and management discourse. Therefore, the mobilisation of an intergovernmental relations ethos in the governance of South Africa, is more important than to view the problematic in federal-unitary discourses, in terms of the Public Administration and management nomenclature.